

# Transition to Biweekly Payroll



## Frequently Asked Questions

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### ABOUT THE TRANSITION

#### **What is the difference between the semimonthly and the biweekly payroll systems?**

If you are paid on the 5th and the 20th of every month, you are in the semimonthly (also called “MSA”) payroll system. If you are paid every other Thursday, you are in the biweekly (also called “PeopleSoft”) payroll system.

#### **What are some changes I can expect with the move to a biweekly pay cycle?**

By moving to a biweekly pay cycle, you will receive 26 paychecks a year instead of 24 paychecks as in the semimonthly system. Most months you will receive two paychecks, but during two months of the year you will receive a third paycheck.

#### **Why is the county converting to a biweekly payroll system?**

For more than 15 years, King County has operated two payroll systems, PeopleSoft and MSA. These separate systems perform the central payroll functions for the county.

In May 2010, the King County Council adopted Ordinance 16818 which states that officers and employees currently paid on a semimonthly pay cycle shall be transitioned to a biweekly pay cycle. The system being implemented is PeopleSoft and it will enable all county agencies to migrate to a biweekly pay cycle.

### THE PAYCHECK

#### **Will the amount of money I receive in the biweekly paycheck be different than what I receive in the semimonthly paycheck?**

Moving to a biweekly pay cycle means that you will receive 26 paychecks per year instead of 24; however, your base rate will remain the same. Because you will receive 26 paychecks a year, each biweekly paycheck will be approximately 8% smaller than your semimonthly paycheck.

#### **When will I receive my last paycheck from the semimonthly pay cycle?**

Your last semimonthly paycheck will be paid on **Jan. 5, 2012**. This paycheck covers Dec. 16-31, 2011.

#### **When will I receive my first biweekly paycheck?**

The **Jan. 19, 2012** paycheck will cover only the hours worked from Jan. 1-6, 2012 because the first eight days of the biweekly pay period were included on the Jan. 5, 2012 paycheck from the semimonthly pay cycle. Your first full biweekly paycheck will be paid on February 2, 2012 and covers the first full biweekly pay period January 7-20, 2012 and begins the biweekly pay cycles.

### **What if I'm on a leave of absence when King County moves to the biweekly payroll cycle?**

Your payroll information will be moved if you are on a leave of absence (paid or unpaid) when the county moves to the biweekly pay system. If you are on an **unpaid** leave, you will receive biweekly paychecks when you return to work. If you are on a **paid** leave, you will receive your first biweekly paycheck on Jan. 19, 2012.

### **How will Chapter 13 bankruptcy payments be handled in the biweekly pay cycle?**

King County will notify the Chapter 13 Trustee's office of the payroll cycle change. They will then send a new bankruptcy payment order to the county and a copy to the employee.

### **How will deductions be handled in the biweekly pay cycle?**

Deductions that are mandated by law such as taxes, court orders, child support and garnishments will be withheld as required. Other deductions where you've made a selection, (for example, your supplemental insurance, charitable campaign contributions and parking fees) will be deducted from the first and second paycheck every month for a total of 24 deductions per year. Union dues will continue to be deducted as authorized and directed by your union. Check with your payroll representative for information on your specific deductions.

### **Will I need to make changes to automatic withdrawals and payments taken from my bank account?**

If you currently use automatic withdrawals or have regularly scheduled payments based on the semimonthly pay schedule, you may want to make adjustments to reflect the paydays of the new biweekly pay cycle.

### **How will deferred compensation be impacted by the change to a biweekly pay cycle?**

You may want to review the amount of your deferred compensation contributions as the set dollar amount may have a bigger impact on your biweekly check since your paycheck amount will be less. Although you will receive 26 paychecks per year in the biweekly payroll system, deferred compensation deductions will only be taken out of 24 paychecks.

### **Will this change affect the direct deposit of my pay?**

No. You do not need to make new arrangements for direct deposit. However, do not forget that you will receive a direct deposit every other Thursday instead of on the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. You may need to contact your financial institution to adjust automatic payments or transfers based on your previous pay cycle.

**This is the first version of Frequently Asked Questions. Updates and additions may be found at [www.kingcounty.gov/onepayroll](http://www.kingcounty.gov/onepayroll) between May 2011 and January 2012.**